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# STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

# IDEALISM, REALISM OR ...? HOW HAVE WE DEALT WITH CHINA?

BY

COLONEL ALFRED E. S. BURKHARD, JR. United States Army

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# IDEALISM, REALISM OR ...? HOW HAVE WE DEALT WITH CHINA?

by

COL Alfred E.S. Burkhard, Jr.

# Dr. John Garofano Project Advisor

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### ABSTRACT

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The demise of the bi-polar world left the United States with a dilemma. Should we proceed as the world's only super power and craft foreign policy based on the theory of "Liberal Internationalism" or that of "Realism"? Either approach is possible - but at a cost that is difficult to predict. Perhaps our foreign policy approach to China, one that may be described as "Pragmatism" can serve as an example for future international affairs. Grounded in reality, capable of adaptation, seeking opportunity to benefit, and open to re-evaluation, "Pragmatism" offers the subjective approach sought by American leaders and foreign policy makers. An honest appraisal of US interests, an understanding of "ends, ways, and means", and a recognition of a changing world are the pre-requisites.

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# IDEALISM, REALISM, OR ...? HOW HAVE WE DEALT WITH CHINA?

### WHAT WILL THE FUTURE HOLD?

The year is 2015. The issue is access to and control of 40% of the flow of the world's supply of oil. China, in years past content with its regional influence and the oils produced in the South China Sea, now possesses a blue water navy and has emerged as a major energy importer and potential challenger to the United States.

Stretched thin by humanitarian commitments to support a friendly country ravaged by a hurricane, a continued presence in the Balkans, unrest in Cuba, and turmoil on the recently unified peninsula of Korea, the US is now challenged by conflict in North Africa. Algeria has invaded Morocco and the Algerian use of WMD threatens not only NATO countries, but also the vital sea-lanes of communication through the Straits of Gibraltar. Iran and Iraq, for many years the targets of a US policy of "dual containment," go to war and the Straits of Hormuz, a choke point in the world's supply of oil, are blocked.

While US forces are responding to threats abroad, a major earthquake along the New Madrid Fault rocks the US. From the city of Memphis north to the Great Lakes, northeast towards New York, and northwest towards Chicago, the country suffers thousands dead, injured, and homeless. The damage to the power

grids, transportation systems, and information systems brings the US stock markets to a halt and the reverberations are felt worldwide. Every aspect of business in the US is affected. Global communications and banking systems are immediately degraded and imperiled.

China, with a blue water navy, bases, a major support infrastructure in Burma, and a vested interest in oil, is the only "super-power" capable of responding quickly to the situation in the Persian Gulf. With her economy, and that of the world, at risk, China contemplates a military response to the Iran/Iraq conflict. Her national interests, earlier investments in the petroleum industry in both countries, and the global impact of a shortage of energy will drive China to act. What response should the US anticipate? Will we have shaped and prepared both the US and China so as to correctly predict the nature and intensity of China's response?

Sound a bit far-fetched? The scene depicted above covers a broad spectrum of possible activities and interests for the US as well as the rest of the world. Borrowed, in large, part from the Strategic Crisis Exercise for 1998 for the US Army War College, the scenario implies global challenges and the potential for a multi-lateral approach to problem solving. While some liberty has been taken by this author to assume a Chinese response with force, the scenario has implications that touch on the major elements of national power. Interests, as well as ends, ways,

and means all demand evaluation. The question to ask as we look at this scenario is one that could pertain to any emerging global or regional power. Will the US have properly shaped and prepared foreign policy as it pertains to China? Will we have missed an opportunity to anticipate and mold the international landscape in anticipation of China as a major world power and potential peer?

# IDEALISM, REALISM, OR ...?

What path should the United States follow in the formulation and execution of foreign policy? As the world's only super power, the choice is ours. Historically, there have been two traditional approaches that may guide us in this decision -"Idealism" and "Realism." While each will be explained in greater depth later in this paper, it suffices to say that the parameters of each have served as guideposts for intellectual discussion, and to a degree, formulation of U.S. policy in the This past experience is not meant to argue that religious adherence to either has been a requirement in foreign relations. Rather, the definitions of each have provided a dichotomy in views for both the students and practitioners of international relations. They provide opposite ends of the spectrum in possible approaches to foreign policy. As such, they may fall short in describing the reality of foreign policy as practiced by all nations, but particularly the United States.

Perhaps there is some middle ground that better describes the formulation and execution of a nation's foreign policy. The case of U.S. foreign policy as it pertains to China is worthy of examination in this light. Our recent and current approach in this case provide what may best be described as a "Pragmatic" approach to the formulation and execution of foreign policy. Neither wholly idealistic, nor realistic in the classic sense of the terms, it is, rather, a blend of idealism tempered with the realities of the global environment and national interests of the players involved. Pragmatism offers leaders and policy makers an option towards the subjective. It allows events to be placed in perspective. Time and the ever changing environment must be addressed. Costs and benefits must be examined - compromises In short, pragmatism allows one to maintain the guiding light offered by either an idealistic or realistic approach, but not be held hostage to the dogmatic application of either void of mitigating or extenuating circumstances that are the norm in the arena of international affairs and foreign policy. To that end, let us proceed with a discussion of the traditional historical approaches to foreign policy.

The broader issue of American foreign policy and the implications of morality are addressed in Robert W. McElroy's work MORALITY AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE ROLE OF ETHICS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. In his examination of the role that ethics play, he describes two approaches to the manner in which

foreign policy is formulated and executed; liberal internationalism (idealism) and realism.¹ Not unlike Kissinger in his work DIPLOMACY, McElroy acknowledges that the two approaches offer insights and differences in the manner in which nations define interests and execute policy. It is important to understand what drives a nation to action and the manner in which this action is taken.

McElroy offers that in the last decade, the role of morality in international affairs has made a comeback, having been "banished to the periphery" for the last quarter of a century. Liberal idealism, a concept strongly supported by political scientists in the period 1918-1945, argues that

all political action is goal oriented and substantive moral principals exist that address international affairs and the formulation of foreign policy is intrinsically a domain of moral choice. <sup>3</sup>

Opposing this view is that of the realists who argue that the issue is that of power and security. McElroy credits Reinhold Neibuhr with spearheading the attack upon liberal internationalism (Idealism). According to Neibuhr,

women and men stand in a position of ambiguity; they are unwilling to accept the dependency that is their lot. From this unwillingness flows the will to power that taints all human relationships.<sup>5</sup>

The drive for power to reduce uncertainty and relieve feelings of insecurity drive man, and nations, to action. The essence of foreign policy and action in the international arena

is reduced to a quest for power and dominance. Hans Morgenthau was a bit more pessimistic as he viewed the democratic institutions that replaced the autocratic institutions as the demise of moral influence in the realm of international relationships. He believed that the nature of the a democratic form of government precluded a single decision maker from exercising judgment solely in the moral realm. Rather, competing demands and interests were subject to great debate and held sway over international relationships. While Neibuhr and Morgenthau offer slightly differing, but consistent views of the role morality played in international relations, the result was, nonetheless, a view away from idealism, leaning more toward realism.

Neither of the approaches described above is sufficient for our dealings with China. An application of either requires an all or nothing approach. Neither offers the ability negotiate within the policy. Ignored are competing demands within the interests of a country, the element of time, the chance for risk in order to benefit, cultural context and historical influence, opportunities to adapt - all factors and influences that must be acknowledged when dealing with this emerging world power.

Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., supports a different, and perhaps better approach to the discussion of foreign policy - that of a pragmatic approach. In his two works, <a href="The American Approach to">The American Approach to</a>
<a href="Foreign Policy: A Pragmatic Perspective">Foreign Policy: A Pragmatic Perspective</a> and <a href="American Diplomacy">American Diplomacy</a>

and the Pragmatic Tradition, he provides a review of American foreign policy decisions that supports the notion of policy grounded in the reality of the world as it exists. He contends that the issue of pragmatism is an intrinsic feature of the American way of life.

Conspicuous hallmarks of the American society have been emphasis upon the "practicality" of ideas; upon "applied" knowledge; upon appeals to experience and common sense in the validation of truth; upon the ideas of progress and the possibility of beneficial change; and upon the necessity for human actions to "face facts" and to adapt themselves to prevailing realities.

Conversely, ideological consistency, abstract intellectual speculation divorced from concrete human problems, and actions in conformity with the requirements of an *a priori* ideological code have not been principles of behavior traditionally valued by Americans. 9

To use an expression sometimes thrown about, one might accuse Crabb of aspiring to the adage that "the truth changes." This may not be far off the mark when national interests are defined or re-evaluated. To hold fast to an ideological position divorced from the reality of the world as it exists, or to fail to recognize the element of time in the formulation and execution of foreign policy would appear to be shortcomings in the adaptation of either idealism or realism. The element of time as a factor in developing strategy cannot be overlooked. This is especially true as one examines our foreign policy as it pertains to China.

A discussion of morality and politics is certainly fertile ground for further study and debate. The limits of this paper preclude an in depth discussion, other than to frame the possible approaches to the formulation and execution of foreign policy as it pertains to US interests and China. This paper will demonstrate why the pragmatic perspective better explains U.S. foreign policy towards China.

### STRATEGY

As is the case with any discussion of American foreign policy, an understanding of the <u>US National Security Strategy</u> (NSS) and the concurrent <u>National Military Strategy</u> (NMS) is required. Therefore, a review of the current national and military strategies is appropriate. While this will certainly not make the reader an expert in American foreign policy or the military strategy to support such, it will provide a common set of definitions and terms.

The current <u>National Security Strategy</u> dated May 1977, addresses the larger concept of engagement and enlargement by first delineating three core objectives. These are:

- •First, to enhance our security with effective diplomacy and with military forces that are ready to fight and win;
- •Second, to bolster America's economic prosperity;
- •And third, to promote democracy abroad. 10

The strategy follows these three core objectives with the caution that in order to work towards the accomplishment of these objectives, we must remain engaged abroad with both new and old partners. In so much as the possible scenario previously described is concerned, it is this author's contention that the US has followed a pragmatic and focused course of foreign policy in an attempt to both shape and prepare for future events and relations with China. Our ends, ways and means are clearly delineated. They follow neither an idealistic nor realistic, but rather pragmatic approach to international relations. The case of our relations with China will show how we have done so.

Included in our national security is a list of priorities. Listed as the second priority is the need to look across the Pacific. In addition to our traditional relationships with Japan, Australia, and the ASEAN nations, we are provided with guidance concerning China. An inward looking China is viewed as detrimental to America and the world. Engaging China in open and deeper dialogue is the best way to work on challenges that affect not only the region, but major issues such as nuclear testing, territorial claims, and emerging economic markets. 13

It is not enough to merely outline core objectives and establish priorities, without first providing definitions for such critical aspects of national security. In this light, the <a href="National Security Strategy">National Security Strategy</a> provides definitions for US national interests. This, in effect, provides a prioritization of our

efforts in foreign policy implementation and execution.

Acknowledging the many demands for US action, three categories of interests are defined:

Vital interests - those of broad, overriding importance to the survival, safety and vitality of our nation.

Important national interests - these do not affect our national survival but they do affect our national well being and the character of the world in which we live.

Humanitarian interests - in the event of natural or manmade disasters or gross violations of human rights, our nation may act because our values demand it. Moreover, in such cases, the force of our example bolsters support for our leadership in the world. 14

While the definitions of US national interests are provided in the National Security Strategy and are generally associated with military action in response to a crisis, it must be cautioned that the military element of national power is not the only tool covered by the aforementioned definitions. Certainly quantifiable and easily recognized, the military response is, in today's multi-polar world, often a limited response. Economic and diplomatic efforts must also be applied in a manner consistent with US interests. While military action may have immediate impact, it is the less obvious, but just as important, cascading effects of diplomatic and economic action that must be seriously considered as well.

# THE ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER

Regardless of the foreign policy to which the U.S. subscribes, the elements of national power remain the same; they are diplomatic, economic, and military. For the sake of this paper, the recently proposed element referred to as information will not be addressed. These three elements of national power provide windows with which one can examine the US approach to foreign policy towards China and evaluate the effectiveness of our pragmatic approach to the end desired - a politically stable, economically open and secure China. 15 Diplomatic engagement provides the US a tool with which to influence China and its role in the international community. Economic engagement is the vehicle with which the US can influence China's actions in the market place and further both Chinese and US economic interests and growth. Military peacetime engagement provides the US with an opportunity to shape the security environment by promoting transparency, conveying democratic ideals, and deterring aggression. These tools provide both the ways and means to achieve our stated end.

## THE MILITARY ELEMENT

A review of the <u>National Military Strategy</u> provides us with the basis for military action, in both peacetime and time of conflict. The strategy can be summed up in four words, "Shape, Respond, Prepare Now". 16 The National Military Strategy

highlights the imperative of engagement and the criticality of an integrated approach that will allow us to shape the international environment. Our peacetime military engagement within Asia offers insights into the pragmatic application of this strategy.

Our bi-lateral agreement with Japan serves as the cornerstone for the military and economic engagement in the Pacific and Asia. This, coupled with the terms of the armistice and our economic stake in Korea, offer examples of our resolve in the region and our commitment to power projection should military action be required. The web of agreements, alliances and treaties provides transparency in terms of our desire for regional stability and are a response to our perception of China as an emerging and capable regional, if not soon to be, global power.

The recently concluded January 1998 trip by the US Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) highlights the broad peacetime engagement approach we have undertaken in regards to China. Issues addressed included an agreement on maritime navigational and transit protocols, continued US support of Taiwan, bi-lateral and multi-lateral defense agreements in the region, arms sales to Iran, technology transfers, and military-to-military contacts. 17 In addition to this recent trip, the US demonstrated resolve in the recent "crisis" between China and Taiwan by placing the US 7th fleet in the Straits of Taiwan, thus defusing a potentially volatile situation between China and the "province" of Taiwan.

The events leading to the successful trip by the SECDEF included visits by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Commander in Chief, Pacific Command. These high level visits complimented the exchange of various subject matter experts, confidence building measures such as port calls by naval vessels, and multi-lateral forums hosted by the US Pacific Command. One example of China's favorable response to our efforts was the visit by the US SECDEF to one of their major air defense command centers - previously off limits to any foreigner, regardless of rank or position held.

The recent and ongoing military peacetime engagement efforts work not only to address the military flash points in the region, but also provide a bridge to regional stability and economic issues. Hence, the integration of vital and important national interests is accomplished

The South China Sea, Taiwan, and Korea are fertile ground for military concerns. 21 Regional influence, sea-lanes of communication and the projection of power are tied to the South China Sea. Territorial claims by many nations provide impetus for conflict. The US position has been one of constraint and consistency. Without getting embroiled in the eaches of various countries' claims, the US has maintained that the territorial claims are less important than the freedom of navigation through the adjacent and surrounding seas. 22 By adopting this position,

the US has been able to remain engaged and present in the region without attempting to resolve regional disputes or claims.

Taiwan represents a continuing opportunity for US regional influence without upsetting the basic Chinese concern for internal stability. The Communiqué of 1972 and the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 provide the US with an opportunity to appease both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China. The desire of all parties concerned that the issue of "one China" be settled peacefully and internally to China is supported by legislation on the books of the US, that while contradictory, allow a pragmatic approach to this dilemma. Interestingly, the issue of Taiwan also provides inroads to a coordinated and consistent economic approach to the engagement of China. In 1992, Taiwan was the sixth largest trading partner for the US, a point not lost on the People's Republic of China. 23 The impact of a free market economy has certain appeal to mainland China. Given China's economic concerns for the future, this point is worthy of continued exploration and encouragement.

Both the US and China agree on what must happen on the peninsula of Korea, but differ on the issue of leadership following unification. While our forward deployed forces in the Republic of Korea represent regional influence and resolve, they also demonstrate our continued desire for transparency. A unified Korea represents regional stability and the prospect for economic growth. Our presence there is an indication of our

intentions to see a peaceful resolution to the conflict and a clear vote for a democratic form of government - one that will foster economic growth and well being. This portends, however, a unified peninsula under Seoul, a continued US-Republic of Korea alliance that feeds fear of foreign threats to China's borders. While acknowledging this fear, the US presence is also recognized as an effort to preclude regional instability and as an "economy of force" measure in that other nations (especially China's) forces are not required to maintain this stability.

Our military peacetime engagement in this region of the world sends a number of signals. We, as well as others in the region, desire stability. We will maintain our alliances and treaties and meet our legal commitments. Instability breeds security concerns in the long run and has a definite dampening effect in the economic realm. We have economic interests in many of the countries in Asia, as well as an interest in freedom of navigation on the sea-lanes of communication. Access to raw materials as well as emerging markets and industrial ventures are requirements for a healthy and growing economy in the US.

While a "realist" view of the military element of power might argue that our alliances and treaties in the Pacific and Asia portend a containment of China, this is not the case. Our overall force reduction and our reliance on coalition warfare, should armed conflict be necessary, speak to a less than aggressive U.S. posture. We do not seek dominance or security

through military power. Our interest-focused, Two Major Regional Conflict capability based strategy acknowledges a decreasing need for, and willingness to resource, a large military structure. Our willingness and desire to approach conflict through coalition building and coalition warfare are clear indicators of a desire for reasoned, balanced, and pragmatic solutions to challenges.

Lest there be misunderstandings regarding capabilities, however, we have not lost sight of the "Respond" aspect of our National Military Strategy. A critical element in the military realm is a clear understanding of a nation's capabilities. We have made no secret of our "Army/Navy/Air Force After Next" efforts, nor our willingness to invest in the future. We continue to maintain the only military with global reach and staying power. At the same time we acknowledge our ability and willingness for unilateral action, should our interests demand such. Military-to-military contacts provide not only transparency in terms of intent, but in terms of capability and resolve as well.

#### THE DIPLOMATIC ELEMENT

The impact of the end of the Cold War has been felt around the world. Those issues formerly on the periphery are now, at various times, center stage. No longer subsumed by the bi-polar struggle between democracy and communism, issues once considered only in the shadow of the greater ideological struggle are now

examined for their worth, not necessarily their contribution to the demise of one ideology or another. Given this new reality, the diplomatic element of power has enjoyed a more visible and diverse role in shaping our dealings with China.

It must be remembered that diplomacy is never practiced for diplomacy's sake. The interests of a country drive the diplomatic process. This process took on new meaning and life with the 1972 Communiqué and President Nixon's "opening of China." While arguably a response to containing the Soviet Union during the cold war, it represented a maturation of US foreign policy in the Pacific with an eye on US interests. We acknowledged China's usefulness in countering the Soviet Union, desired the extraction of US forces from Viet Nam, and looked to the future with China as an emerging regional and world power.

This decision also provided for some interesting twists in the development of foreign policy. Domestic political, as well as economic, interests drove Congress to pass the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 following the withdrawal of official US diplomatic recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan). 26 Short and long term goals for the US clashed and the resulting ambiguity worked to our advantage. We have been able to maintain relations with both China and Taiwan - a pragmatic approach that serves to quell domestic political, as well as economic concerns. The fact that Taiwan was the US's sixth largest trading partner in 1992 has not lost on either China or the US.

While many years have passed since the 1972 Communiqué, the diplomatic dialogue with China has continued. No longer is the focus merely ideological, with security concerns at the forefront. The topics of discussion now include regional stability and influence, nuclear testing and technology, the environment, economic growth, energy, population growth, hunger, standards of living, health, transportation, human rights, and democracy. The interagency process has taken on new meaning and magnitude as diplomats engage China across the broad spectrum of issues.

Within the diplomatic realm, the issue of human rights is an opportunity for the idealist to advocate action strictly along the lines of moral inadequacy in China. Imprisonment of political dissenters, slave/child labor, women's' rights, and infanticide are topics in the media on a recurring basis. These actions are at odds with western, and in particular, U.S. values. No doubt, these are serious concerns. Nonetheless, to advocate an integrated diplomatic, economic, and military response that would condemn and isolate China flies in the face of the current reality of the world. Thousands of years of history, culture, and context cannot be wished away or ignored.

In his speech on 24 October 1997, preceding the visit to the U.S. by China's President Jiang Zemin, President Clinton stated that

This pragmatic policy of engagement, of expanding our areas of cooperation with China while confronting our differences openly and respectfully--this is the best way to advance our fundamental interests and our values and to promote a more open and free China.<sup>27</sup>

These public remarks followed many months of public, as well as private, diplomatic efforts covering the range of topics mentioned earlier. Included in these discussions is the subject of human rights. The recently released State Department 1998 report on human rights in China is thirty three pages in length.<sup>28</sup> While the length and weight of such a document might be cause for concern, it is important to note that the report states "Marxist ideology has given way to economic pragmatism in recent years".<sup>29</sup> Acknowledging that problems remain, the report is even-handed in pointing out progress and improvements. Discussion in the various sections of the report goes beyond human rights in an isolated sense and addresses the economic and political impact of this environment.

A detailed examination of the various sections of this report offers an abundance of material for dissecting the culture and country of China. The importance of the report, however lies in the abundance of information and material now available to other nations of the world. It is within this cultural context that

one can see the profound changes taking place in China. This same information provides insights and inroads to the diplomatic process and the integration of political, military, and economic measures to advance the interests of the US while acknowledging the sovereignty of China.

# THE ECONOMIC ELEMENT

Given the recent turn of events in the world economic markets as a result of the "crashing of the Asian markets", the economic element of power has, of late, been a major concern for the US. Understandably, the result has been open and continuous bilateral as well as multi-lateral discussion. While the facts and figures associated with each of the countries involved have been the subject matter of volumes in recent economic literature, it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine each in detail. Generally speaking, the recent economic troubles of the "Asian Tigers," the focus of billions of dollars in foreign direct investment over the last decade, have pointed to the globally integrated nature of the world economies. Emerging industrialization, political transformation, the demise of centrally planned economies, crony capitalism, and weak financial institutions have all affected the context within which business is conducted. Weaknesses in any one country have immediate and long term impact throughout the world.

China's emergence into the world economy has been of significant impact. In the aggregate, China is still emerging from an agrarian based, closed society into a global power. In terms of recent history, the struggle between nationalism and communism resulted in the formation of Taiwan - a "province" that has enjoyed significant economic influence in the region. Tollowing Mao's leadership and influence and the resulting economic ventures such as the "Great Leaps", an era of pragmatism evolved in the 1970s that continued with varying velocity and impact. The impact of reforms associated with this pragmatism planted seeds of change in various segments of society. A brief economic history is beneficial at this point.

Reform in the countryside saw a partial return to a free market economy and capitalism. Foreign investment was encouraged and special economic zones were established. This in turn required a change in the central planning approach and the state owned enterprise system previously used. With the establishment of town and village enterprises and a move towards market based pricing came a problem - that of corruption in the form of crony capitalism. This in turn hit at the heart of government control and the ability of the central party to maintain control of this limited movement toward capitalism. The political apparatus was at risk. Inflation, financial control at the province level, and the perception that the central government was no longer able to provide for the people caused the central government to tighten

control, both economically and politically. The end of this twenty-year move away from pure communism was the incident in Tiananmen Square and the re-assertion of government control.<sup>32</sup>

Reform in the 1990s followed a brief period of isolation. With a now booming economy and increased foreign investment, the economic ties to the rest of Asia and the western world became a major concern. More decentralized control, a central banking system that lost control, a heavy national debt, residual problems with some of the state owned enterprises, and a fixed currency all contributed to continued economic problems.<sup>33</sup>

Given the potential economic problems in China, as well a the rest of Asia, pragmatism has been at the forefront in US economic efforts towards China. In 1996, foreign investment in China totaled \$42.3 billion or approximately one third of the total foreign investment world wide. 34 The US trade deficit with China was approximately \$40 billion during this same time period. 35 Given the current population growth, China will need to generate 15 million jobs per year to maintain economic growth and stability. 36 The implications for demands on the world energy resources as China develops are staggering. Interest in and access to energy, both oil and natural gas, will soon rival those of the US. The need for energy will require both access to foreign sources and development of domestic sources. Investment in foreign sources or cooperative ventures in the purchase of these resources will further imbed China in the global market.

The regional and global security concerns associated with a nation of this size give cause for concern. To address US economic interests in China from a strictly idealistic view - that of promoting capitalism and ultimately democracy - is to ignore the larger self centered economic interest the US has in China's economic viability. The interdependence of the world economy, especially in the emerging and industrially developing nations in Asia, is a study in "important" and ultimately "vital" national interests.

While the magnitude of the economic potential of China is staggering, the rest of Asia cannot be ignored. In that regard, US involvement in on going efforts with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the various economic blocks and alliances speak to the maintenance of US economic well being. The second and third order, or cascading effects associated with the failure of any portion of the Asian market portend negative impact on the US economy. Given the international flavor of many of the major business ventures in both the US and abroad, it is no stretch of the imagination to believe that business interests and objectives have, or will continue to influence the US economic element of power.

# CONCLUSION

International liberalism, realism, or pragmatism? The debate over the various schools of thought might lead the reader to believe that one path or the other must be chosen in terms of international relations and the resulting foreign policy. Our National Security Strategy and National Military Strategy suggest otherwise. The National Security Strategy provides guidance and direction in terms of defined interests. Recognizing limited resources, the strategy for our engagement worldwide provides for a pragmatic selection of options in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. Our military strategy further defines the limits of our engagement commensurate with diplomatic and economic elements of national power.

Multi-polarity has replaced bi-polarity as the environment within which the US must now formulate foreign policy. The emergence of China as a global power has introduced an interesting opportunity for the US to temper past ideological stances and come to grips with challenges that face a nation in the throws of cultural, political, and economic transformation. While vestiges of the cold war mentality, often caught up in terms of human rights and issues of morality, remain, the reality of a new global environment must be faced. Three thousand years of history and cultural do not change overnight. To attempt to isolate China and still expect to shape the future of the world is pure folly.

In practical terms, the US embarked on a pragmatic approach to foreign policy towards China with the 1972 communiqué. It marked the beginning of a policy of engagement focused on US national interests. A purely moral and emotional solution to the issue of Taiwan was subordinated to US national interests concerning our involvement in Viet Nam and a desire for regional stability. Rather, we adopted a pragmatic solution to domestic economic and political concerns, the Taiwan Relations Act.

We continued to follow a pattern of pragmatism in each of the three arenas of national power. Diplomatically we maintained a relationship that allowed us to articulate our desires for democratic reform and freedom associated with western values. At the same time we recognized China's sovereignty in resolving internal issues.

Militarily we contributed to regional stability through treaties and alliances. Forward-deployed forces, exercises, training assistance and other forms of military contact served to keep us engaged in the region. Investment in economic growth was a reality for many nations in the area when relieved of the requirement to develop major force structure and capabilities for defense. These actions served not only to assure friends and allies, but also served to provide transparency in our capabilities and intentions. Friends, as well as potential adversaries were the target audience of actions to demonstrate US both resolve and restraint.

US economic involvement in our relationship with China is potentially the most telling example of our pragmatic approach to foreign relations and national interests. The estimated population of 1.2 billion people represents not only a lucrative market for US businesses, but a potential economic competitor unequaled in the history of our country. US investment in and our trade deficit with China represent major economic factors. While our efforts in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and World trade Organization certainly work to China's advantage, our long term economic stability is at the forefront of our participation. The integrated nature of the global market demand that the impact of any financial decision be examined against our economic interests.

Our pragmatic approach to international relations is not without precedent. We are not breaking new ground. As Crabb points out in <a href="The American Approach to Foreign Policy: A">The American Approach to Foreign Policy: A</a>

Pragmatic Perspective, we, as a nation, adopted those aspects of the British form of government that we felt were useful in the establishment of the United States, while at the same time rejecting the aspect of government by monarchy. The Amore recent example of American pragmatism is the role of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President of the United States. Thought by many to be the embodiment of American idealism, his secret deals with the United Kingdom and his dealings with the Soviet Union during

World War II stand as examples of pragmatism focused on achieving and protecting U.S. interests. 38

Our desire for democracy to flourish and respect for human rights is not likely to wane. Our desire to maintain the moral highground in all we undertake will remain strong. Our role as the world's leading super power is likely secure for the near future. Nevertheless, our pragmatic approach to foreign relations will remain a cornerstone in foreign policy formulation and execution. As long as the US maintains it current definition of national interests, our approach to China, as well as other developed and emerging nations will be driven by this pragmatism.

Perhaps E.H. Carr, although recognized as a realist in the study of international relations, unknowingly summed up a useful description of pragmatism when he stated

politics will, to the end of history, be an arena where conscience and power meet, where the ethical and coercive factors of human life will interpenetrate and work out their tentative and uneasy compromises. The compromises, like solutions of other human problems, will remain uneasy and tentative. But it is an essential part of any compromise that both factors shall be taken into account. <sup>39</sup>

Word Count: 6,319

#### ENDNOTES

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1. Robert W. McElroy, Morality and American Foreign Policy: The Role of Ethics in International Affairs (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 4
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- <sup>2</sup>·Ibid., 3.
- 3. Ibid., 4
- 4. Ibid., 14.
- <sup>5</sup>·Ibid., 13.
- 6. Ibid., 22.

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- 8. Ibid.
- 9. Ibid.
- 10. The White House, <u>A National Security Strategy For A New Century</u> (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), I.
  - 11. Ibid.
  - 12. Ibid., ii.
  - 13. Ibid.
  - <sup>14</sup>·Ibid., 9.
- <sup>15.</sup>A National Security Strategy Policy For A New Century, 16.
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- <sup>17</sup>·Mr. Randy Schriver, Country Director for China, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, interview by author, 5 February 1998, Carlisle Barracks, PA..
  - 18. Ibid.

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- <sup>20.</sup>Ambassador James Lilley, Former Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, interview by author, 5 February 1998, Carlisle Barracks, PA..
  - <sup>21</sup>·Ibid.
  - 22. Ibid.
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  - <sup>24</sup> Ambassador Lilley, interview by author.
  - 25. Ibid.
  - <sup>26</sup>·Hickey, 29.
- <sup>27</sup>·William J. Clinton, "Remarks by the President in Address on China and the National Interest" 24 October 1997: Available from <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov">http://www.whitehouse.gov</a>; Internet: accessed 8 February 1998.
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- $^{31}$ ·Ibid., Summation of information provided in the case study pages 7-9.
- <sup>32.</sup>Ibid., Summation of information provided in the case study, pages 9-16.
- <sup>33.</sup>Ibid., Summation of information provided in the case study, pages 16-19.

34.U.S. Department of State, 1996 Country Reports on Economic Policy and Trade Practices, January 1997; Available from <a href="http://www.state.gov/www/issues/ec...de\_reports/eastasia96/">http://www.state.gov/www/issues/ec...de\_reports/eastasia96/</a> china96.html>; Internet: accessed 18 February 1998.

35. Ibid.

<sup>36.</sup>This information was provided by a guest speaker participating in the Commandant's Lecture Series; 11 February 1998.

<sup>37.</sup>Crabb, <u>The American Approach to Foreign Policy: A</u> Pragmatic Perspective, xiii.

<sup>38.</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>39</sup>·McElroy, 19.

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